

1308 F Street NW (Dash's Designer)  
Washington, D.C.

HABS No. DC-380

HABS,  
DC,  
WASH,  
248-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

1308 F STREET NW (Dash's Designer)

HABS,  
DC,  
WASH,  
248-

Location: 1308 F Street NW, Lot 22, Square 254, Washington, D.C.

Present Owner: The Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation, 425 13th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20004

Present Occupant: Dash's Designer

Present Use: Men's clothing sales (retail); to be demolished

Significance: Built between 1854 and 1858 (D.C. Tax and Assessment Records, National Archives), this building is the oldest existing structure on the south side of this block of F Street. The building is typical of the small, mid-nineteenth century masonry structures of the Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District and Washington's old downtown. It forms a link in the chain of varied commercial buildings which enliven the F Street business district. The facade's metal window hoods and cornice are large in scale and a grand gesture for an otherwise modest building.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: c. 1854-1858 (dates based on D.C. Tax and Assessment Records at the National Archives)
2. Architect: unknown
3. Original and subsequent owners: The property on Lot 22 was owned by Caleb C. Willard until his death in 1905, when ownership was maintained by the executors and trustees of his will. In 1940, Walter Willard Boyd obtained deed on the property from the Estate (Liber #7563, Folio 289; 12/31/40). Purchase by PADC followed in 1979.
4. Builder: unknown
5. Original plans and construction: There are no original plans for this building. From examination, it would seem that the Chicago style window on the second floor originally resembled the smaller hooded window above and to the west. The main and secondary entrances appear to be in their original recessed locations, although the storefront has been altered.

6. Alterations and additions: Building permits indicate storefront alteration in 1914 (#492, 7/29/14) and a rear addition in 1915 (#3604, 3/19/15). Both additions are by Marsh and Peter, local architects who designed three of the buildings adjacent to Dash's building. Show window alterations in 1929 (#120038, 1/5/29) are by J.S. Wilkinson. This permit, however, does not refer to the large second floor window on the main facade, which already appears in the 1914 permit drawing.

B. Use:

The continued existence of this building stands out in comparison to the demolition of other early buildings on the surrounding lots. This building has housed many different long-term tenants, including: tailors, lawyers, and various maritime interests.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary sources:

District of Columbia Building Permits, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

District of Columbia Deed Records Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C.

D.C. Tax and Assessment Records, 1850-1879 National Archives, Washington, D.C.

2. Secondary sources:

All of the following are available at the Washingtoniana Division of the Martin Luther King Branch of the D.C. Public Library.

Baist Real Estate Atlas Collection

D.C. City Directories, 1865-1979

D.C. General Assessment Records

Prepared by: Anderson, Notter/Mariani  
Historic Preservation Consultants for PADC

Wendy Hunter  
Architect for PADC  
December 1979

Robert S. Lange  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
June 1980

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This building, with applied Italianate ornamentation, is the oldest structure on the south side of the 1300 block of F Street.
2. Condition of fabric: The building is in good condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The building is three stories high, plus a basement, and is three bays wide. It measures 30' x 100' and is approximately 50' high at F Street.
2. Foundation: cement
3. Wall construction, finish and color: The facade is divided into three clearly defined bays. A metal fascia below this rests on decorative brackets which are doubled at either side of the center bay. The segmental ornamented arches at the lower edge of the fascia firmly establish the three-bay rhythm of the facade and echo the arched window hoods below.

Italianate in style, the building is faced in red brick with applied metal and wood ornament. The facade has been painted beige with a dark brown trim. Above the modern storefront, a large rectangular window breaks the regular pattern of arched windows.

4. Structural system: Consists of brick bearing party walls with wood joists running east-west.
5. Openings:

- a. Doors and doorways: The center door to the retail area is of steel and glass. The exterior door to the upper floors on the west of the show window area is of wood and glass.
- b. Windows: Three windows on the third floor and one on the second are segmentally arched. Two ornate consoles support metal hoods with moldings, and metal sills also rest on brackets at each opening. Third floor windows are two-over-two-light double hung sash. The one small second story window is a single pane double hung sash. On the second floor level, a large rectangular Chicago-style window is located under the two windows above and may be an alteration to the original facade (no building records available).

At the ground floor the entry and projecting display windows are surmounted by a fascia clad with turquoise

ceramic tile. This obviously represents a more recent alteration than those of 1929 (see above).

6. Roof:

- a. Shape: flat
- b. Cornice: The metal modillioned cornice projects from the facade. A fascia rests on brackets encasing the segmentally arched hoods of the windows below. The brackets are doubled at either side of the center bay.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: The north portion of the basement has recently been paneled for use as additional sales space. On either side of the central staircase are doors leading to storage and mechanical equipment space.
- b. First floor: The retail space here is a completely open plan, with dressing rooms and a small tailor's bench in the north end of the building.
- c. Second and third floors: The second and third floors are divided into two distinct levels on each floor due to the later addition. Access to these commercial and storage spaces is through a single run staircase on the west wall of the building at the show window level.

2. Stairways:

- a. The center stairs in the retail area are carpet covered with a metal handrail.
- b. The staircase to the upper floors is a single-run woodenstain with ornamental balusters and decorative newels.

3. Flooring: Retail space has been carpeted. Upper floors have tongue-in-groove wood floors with simple molded baseboards.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: On the ceilings of several rooms, pressed tin is visible. However, most ceilings are covered by hung acoustic tile. All wood trim inside is molded and appears original to the building.

5. Openings: Several wood doors on the second and third floors have glass panes and brass handles and locks. The remainder are paneled wood. Windows on the third floor have interior shutters which fold into side panels.

D. Site:

This building is on the south side of F Street and faces north. Due to its proximity to Pennsylvania Avenue and the White House, F Street (between 9th Street and 15th Street) has been the center of Washington's commercial activity throughout its history. Today, the street is composed of buildings in a variety of architectural styles dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries. F Street contains predominantly four to five story buildings with one or two ten to fourteen story buildings occurring on each block. In the 1300 block, three tall structures exist: the National Press Building, Bond's, and the American Building. The strong architectural cohesion of this block reflects the fact that most of the buildings were constructed within a ten-year period (1922-32), and that the three buildings located at 1310-1322 F Street were designed by the same architectural firm, Marsh and Peter. All buildings on the block exhibit great care in architectural detailing and ornamentation, particularly at the street level. Such care and deliberation of design in this block of F Street has enhanced the pedestrian path and reduced the image of grand scale to that of human proportion.

Prepared by: Anderson, Notter/Mariani  
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Wendy Hunter  
Architect for PADC  
December 1979

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation (PADC) in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the completion of the Pennsylvania Avenue development plan. John A. Burns, AIA, and Emily J. Harris were the HABS project coordinators. The records were prepared under the general supervision of Jeffrey S. Wolf, Architect with PADC. Historic data was compiled by PADC consultants in historic preservation Anderson, Notter/Mariani, and expanded by Wendy Hunter, Architect with PADC. Documentary photographs were taken by Jeffrey S. Wolf in December 1979. The data was edited and prepared for transmittal to the Library of Congress by Robert S. Lange, an architectural historian in the HABS office, June 1980.